

***Sparganium fluctuans* (Morong) B.L. Robins.**

floating bur-reed

Sparganiaceae (Bur-reed Family)

Status: State Threatened

Rank: G5S1

General Description: Adapted from Douglas et al. (2001): This aquatic perennial herb grows from long rhizomes. The stems are usually submerged and 2-1/2 to 5 ft. (0.8 to 1.5 m) long. The leaves are alternate, limp, unkeeled, usually floating, linear, ribbon-like, 2 to 3 1/4 ft. (0.6-1 m) long and 1/8 to 1/2 in. (3-11 mm) wide. The inflorescence is branched and composed of 2 to 4 female-flowered heads below and 1 to 6 male-flowered heads above. The female-flowered heads are 1/2 to 1 in. (1.5 to 2.3 cm) wide and subtended by conspicuous leaflike bracts. There are 6 perianth segments that are spoon-shaped and often have a dark spot on the tips. There is one stigma. The achenes (fruits) are 1/16 to 1/4 in. (2 to 5 mm) long, constricted at the middle, beaked, and curved.

Identification Tips: *Sparganium fluctuans* may be mistaken for *Sparganium angustifolium* and *Sparganium emersum*. Their achenes, perianth segments, and anthers can distinguish these species. The achenes of *S. fluctuans* are dark reddish brown with strongly curved beaks, whereas the achenes of *S. angustifolium* are reddish to brownish at the base with straight or slightly curved beaks, while the achenes of *S. emersum* are greenish at the base with straight or slightly curved beaks. The perianth segments of *S. fluctuans* are attached near the base of the stipe, and its anthers are less than 1/32 in. long, while the perianth segments of both *S. angustifolium* and *S. emersum* are attached near the top of the stipe, and their anthers are more than 1/32 in. (0.8 mm) long

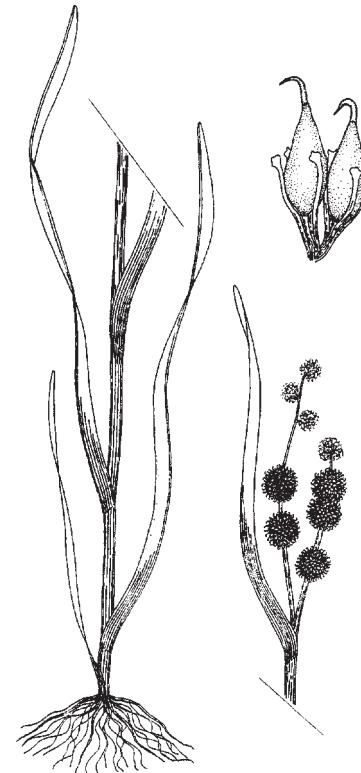
Phenology: Within Washington this species is identifiable from July through August.

Range: This circumpolar species is found south to Pennsylvania in eastern North America and Washington in western North America. In Washington *Sparganium fluctuans* is known from Clallam County.

Habitat: This species grows in ponds, lakeshores, and slow-moving streams in the lowland and montane zones. In Washington, this taxon has been seen growing along a lake, on a gentle sloping organic/sand substrate, at an elevation of 29 ft (8 m). Associated species in Washington include watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum* sp.), Richardson's pondweed (*Potamogeton richardsonii*), and floating pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*).

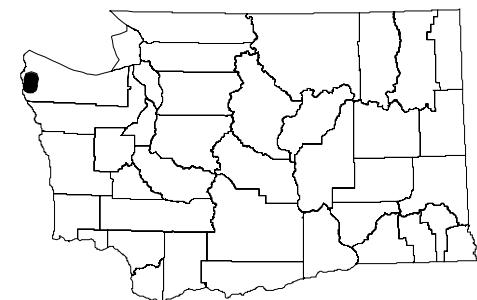
Sparganium fluctuans

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Known distribution
of *Sparganium fluctuans*
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

Sparganium fluctuans

floating bur-reed



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Sparganium fluctuans

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Ecology: *Sparganium fluctuans* is commonly found in quiet, cold, acidic to neutral waters that are low in nutrients and organic matter, and up to 6½ ft. (2 m) deep (but usually less).

State Status Comments: This species is known from less than 5 recent occurrences in Washington, and limited to a small geographic area.

Inventory Needs: Ponds, lakeshores, and slow-moving streams in lowland and montane zones in Clallam County should be systematically surveyed for additional populations. Known occurrences should be revisited. Very little is known about this species in the state. Consequently, information of both populations and habitat should be collected.

Threats and Management Concerns: Definite threats have not been identified for this species. However, the small number of known occurrences in Washington is a major concern.

Comments: Hitchcock et al. (1969) do not list this species. Keys can be found in Douglas et al. (2001) and FNA (2000).

References:

Douglas, G.W., G.B. Straley, D. Meidinger, and J. Pojar. 2001. *Illustrated Flora of British Columbia* vol. 7: *Monocotyledons (Orchidaceae Through Zosteraceae)*. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Victoria, British Columbia. 379 pp.

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Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1969. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms, and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 914 pp.